

EARLY HISTORY  
OF THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
--MISSOURI SYNOD  
IN  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
AND VICINITY

1843—1893

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**T**HIS chronicle will treat of the early history of our Lutheran Church in Cleveland and Vicinity, the first 50 years up to 1893. Now and then we may look beyond the time of that year, but only for a moment and for reasons more or less obvious.

The beginnings of our Lutheran Church in Cleveland date back to the year 1843 when Zion congregation was founded, which later, at the time of the incorporation, adopted the name Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cleveland, Ohio.

The information in this present narrative on Zion and also on Trinity congregation in the first forty years was taken directly from the original sources (*the Quellen, all in German*).

The records of Zion congregation begin with January 28, 1848, which means that the first book of minutes from 1843 till 1848, if it had been prepared, was lost. However, there are references after 1847 which give us a few essential facts necessary for those first years. For example, the minutes of March 10, 1848, in Zion contain the resolution "that in the future the worship should be conducted as it had been conducted in the previously occupied Concert Hall in 1845." Furthermore, in the chronicle of Trinity Church, written personally by the Rev. J. C. Lindemann, its first resident pastor, who came to Cleveland in 1853, we find the notice that Zion congregation was founded in April, 1843 and that David Schuh was called as the first pastor. Pastor Schuh was titled a member of the Ohio Synod and traveling missionary towards Sandusky. Pastor Lindemann also refers to an article on Zion, appearing in Vol. 5, No. 16 of the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, published by J. Schmidt, which stated: "From April 1 to June 10 pastor D. Schuh made four visits. He was scheduled henceforth to preach every fourteen days. In the interval licensed Candidate L. Richter preached. On June 10th the congregation numbered about 60 members. On Pentecost the first Communion was celebrated in which 45 communicants participated." This article was signed by L. Richter, by the Deacons Christian Herth, John Jacob Roth, Christian Pfaff, Daniel Moeder, and Fried. Wilhelm Weiss; and by the Elders: Adam Haas and Friedrich Fey. It is finally recorded in Trinity's account of 1845 that pastor David Schuh resigned and that pastor August Schmidt was called to be the second pastor. He served till 1851. During the vacancy pastor Steinbach of Liverpool (*now Valley City*) preached. Then the Rev. Henry Christian Schwan entered upon his long and distinguished ministry.

Cleveland in 1843 was a city of about 7500. It had been incorporated as a village in 1814 and received its charter as a city March 5, 1836. The city government was established April 11, 1836, the first mayor being John W. Willey. So, Zion congregation was founded only seven years after Cleveland had been incorporated as a city.

The ruling families in Cleveland were from New England. One of their number, Moses Cleaveland, was honored by having this village on the southern shore of Lake Erie, at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River, named after him. Little could he know that this place would develop into a large metropolitan city.

Before 1843 also some German Lutheran families had come to live in Cleveland. Since there was no Lutheran Church in the city, some of them had joined the "Schifflein Christi", the so-called "Brick-church" of the Evangelical Communion. But a small group among them, very loyal in their Lutheran faith and confession, cancelled their membership in this congregation because of its rationalistic teachings and unionistic practices. ("Wegen rationalistischer Lehre und unionistischer Praxis", as Lindemann said). The founders of Zion, in the Constitution which they adopted, charged their pastors to preach the Gospel in all truth and purity and to be faithful to the principles of the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

In 1845 a meeting took place in Zion which was to be of importance for the future history of our entire Missouri Synod. Pastot Lindemann, in a short closing paragraph of his 1845 Chronicles, wrote: "In September a Conference was held in Cleveland in which the establishment of a truly evangelical Lutheran Synod was considered and approved by resolution. (*Beraten und beschlossen*). Present were" . . . but the names were not entered.

We know, however, from other sources the names of the men who were present at that historic meeting. In 'A Century of Grace, Missouri Synod, 1847-1947', Walter A. Baepler says on page 87: "The Loehe men and their associates met at Cleveland, September 13-18. Present were Wyneken, Sihler, Winkler, Ernst, Burger, Selle, Schmidt, Husmann, Richter, Detzer, Romanowski, Schuster, Hattstaedt, Baumgart, Lochner, Kornbausch, and two students: Wernle, Winkler's student, and Frincke (Fricke), Sihler's student. Craemer could not attend on account of illness, and Saupert was absent because of distance. Brohm, one of the Saxons, participated by means of correspondence from New York.

"At this convention the Loehe men who were members of the Ohio Synod, in a document signed September 18, severed their connection with this body. Instead of organizing a new Ohio synod, as had been suggested by Ernst, the group decided to endeavor to include the Saxons in the new body, and delegates were appointed to visit the men in Missouri."

It was, under God, a decision of destiny not to organize a new Ohio Synod but to endeavor to include the Saxons in the new body. This was therefore the first and determinative step on the way to the establishment of our Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and it is of general historic interest that the meeting September 13-18, 1845 was held in the upper room in Concert Hall in Cleveland, the place of worship for Zion congregation.

In the year 1848, in Zion's minutes of February 13th and also in Trinity's account, we have the information, that Zion dedicated its Church building on January 20th, that it was situated at the corner of York (now Hamilon) Street and Division Alley, that it cost \$6,000, and that Altar and Pulpit were made by Gottlieb Gerstenberger. At that time the congregation also decided to open a list for pledges (*Unterschriften*) for the support of the pastor and the work of the church, a gentle reminder that pledges are not the discovery or invention of our modern age. Besides, the Church Council even functioned as a nominating committee to present a slate of nominees for the office of Deacon, Elder and Trustee.

As long as the congregation worshipped on the third floor of the "Concert Hall", no school was possible. But when the church had been built on York Street, without loss of time a school was established. The first teacher was Mr. Wagener. He gathered the children about him first in the vestibule of the church and later, as the enrollment increased, in the church itself. From 1849 to 1855 the school was conducted by teachers F. Walz, Kaeppel, and F. Baum. In 1855 teacher Brauer was called, who in 1865 accepted a call to Baltimore and a few years thereafter became Professor of Music at the Teachers Seminary in Addison, Ill.

The parochial school in those days was highly cherished as a valuable aid to the spiritual life of the children and also as a missionary arm of the congregation. It is not hard to understand why it was so regarded and treated for a large number of the heavy waves of German immigration gladly sent their children to the German school and in the process often both children and parents were thereby won for the Church.

The year 1851 came to be significant in the story of Zion congregation for it marked the year in which the Rev. Henry Christian Schwan arrived in Cleveland, the third pastor of Zion, serving it till 1899, the last decades as associate pastor. From 1852 to 1878 he served as Vice-President of the Central District, Vice-President of the General Body, and President of the Central District; from 1878 to 1899 he was President of our Missouri Synod. On the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, 1893, Luther Seminary of the Norwegian Lutheran Synod conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

The exposition of the Catechism, written chiefly by Dr. Schwan and known among us as the Schwan Catechism, was used in our Synod from 1896 till 1943. The Lutheran Cyclopedie on page 962 says this: "Dr. Schwan is counted among the fathers of the Missouri Synod. An earnest disciple and able exponent of confessional Lutheranism, he was one of the chief builders of the faithful and flourishing Lutheran church of the city of Cleveland and a trusty counselor and teacher of the whole Synod, his influence extending even beyond its confines. His unwavering fidelity to the Lutheran Confessions, combined with a fine Christian tact, a well-poised mind, and sound judgment concerning men and the times, together with his modesty and refinement, fitted him for the position of President, especially during the trying days of the controversy on election and the stirring times of the period of expansion then setting in."

This is the eminent man that came to Zion in 1851. He was installed by pastor Steinbach of Liverpool (*now Valley City*). He was born April 5, 1819 at Horneburg, Hanover. He studied at the universities of Goettingen and Jena, graduating in 1842. After his ordination he was a tutor and mission pastor on the plantation of a wealthy coffee planter near Bahia, Brazil. Having promised his uncle Wyneken to keep the need of the Lutherans in the United States in mind, he came over in 1850, serving first in a small congregation at Black Jack (*New Bielefeld*), Mo., and then having been recommended by Dr. William Sihler of Fort Wayne, Indiana to Zion, he accepted the call and came to Cleveland in 1851.

But his ministry in Zion in 1851 began amid difficulties. The first difficulty revolved around the former pastor, August Schmidt, who had resigned in an atmosphere of disturbance, and who now, after failing in a nondescript effort to minister to a group of Lutheran Christians in East Cleveland, Euclid County (*now South Euclid*), endeavored to establish an opposition altar to Zion by preaching in the Courthouse in Cleveland and inviting his former members to rally to him. But this ended in failure for pastor Schmidt.

The second difficulty, to pastor Schwan's great surprise turned out unwittingly to be of his own doing. Let Zion's own record — Fiftieth Anniversary of the Dedication of Zion Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio, tell the story, on page five: "It was during pastor Schwan's time that the much published '*Story of the Christmas Tree*' took place. In fact, it was during his first year in Cleveland, 1851. On Christmas Eve of that year Pastor Schwan brought a lighted Christmas tree into his church, intending no offense to anyone, not even aware that he was introducing something new. He only meant to make his first Christmas with his new parishioners a truly happy one. The next day, however, the whole town was in an uproar about it. An editorial in one of the newspapers called the tree in Zion Church a 'nonsensical, asinine, moronic absurdity, besides being silly.' Even members of the congregation thought it was sacrilege and idolatry to have such a tree in the church. Finding it hard to believe that the use of the Christmas tree was really unknown to the people of Cleveland, Pastor Schwan began to make inquiries, by personal contacts as well as by correspondence. He learned that the lighting of the Christmas tree had been a custom in the home of the Imgard family in Wooster, Ohio, since 1847. Fortified with this information, Pastor Schwan convinced the leaders of the community and his congregation that his Christmas tree was not so wicked as it had been made out to be. The next year the lights of the Christmas tree were again blazing in Zion Church, as they have been ever since at Christmas time; and not only in Zion Church of Cleveland, but in homes and churches everywhere.

"On the basis of the above facts the claim has been made that Pastor Schwan was the first to introduce the use of the Christmas tree in a church. That claim, however, is not quite correct. There is evidence that the Rev. John Muehlhaeuser of Rochester, New York, used the Christmas tree in his church as early as 1840. There, however, it was chiefly a money-making scheme, admission being charged to raise money for the church. Therefore, although Pastor Schwan was not the first to introduce the Christmas tree into the church, as was believed for a time, we may still credit him with the honor of lifting the custom to a worthy plane and bringing out its beautiful significance."

When the fifth annual convention of our Synod was held June 18-23, 1851 in Milwaukee, Wis., Zion congregation was accepted into membership in Synod. The very next year in the meeting of June 6th Zion extended an invitation to Synod to meet in Cleveland in 1853. The invitation was accepted. Synod met in the new church of Zion on York Street. By the way, the next time Synod met in Cleveland we wrote 1935. In 1962, the Lord willing, we shall again play host to our Synod, now known as The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, and now large enough to require as a meeting place, the Public Auditorium.

In 1852 we find in Trinity's record the notice that on October 17th St. Paul's Church in Liverpool (*now Valley City*), Medina Co., was dedicated by pastors Schwan, Besel, Strieter (at Elyria) and Steinbach.

In this same year Zion resolved to build a parsonage for pastor Schwan thus giving him a free house besides his salary of \$250. For this building pledges were again solicited, this time also from the young people, and the Church Council was authorized to borrow some money if this should become necessary. In the minutes of August 2nd a missionary note is sounded, announcing 1) that there will be an offering for the Seminary in St. Louis and 2) that a missionary box (*Missions-Buechse*) will be placed in the church, offering reminder and opportunity for special gifts of grace and thanksgiving from time to time.

The notable event in Zion during the year 1853 was self-evidently the Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States. Preparations were made in the meeting of February 28th and in a special meeting called for that purpose a week later. A committee of two: G. Gerstenberger and Henke, was chosen to secure lodging for all the delegates and visitors.

Such a convention, bringing representatives of Lutheran Churches from New York to St. Louis and meeting on York Street not far from the heart of the city, must have received considerable attention particularly from all those interested in the Lutheran Church. A result of such interest is indicated in the fact that in the July meeting, shortly after the convention, 17 people were received as members of Zion congregation. This was a large number, even though members were received throughout those years owing to continuing immigration.

During the sessions of the convention, June 1-11, the establishing of a mission on the west side of the Cuyahoga River, the region then called Ohio City, was considered and encouraged. Zion carried this into reality by resolving on July 20th to build a church and school in Ohio City. It decided further that Zion and Ohio City should be one parish with two districts and two pastors preaching alternately in either place but each having charge of all other pastoral work in his own district. The Rev. John C. W. Lindemann of Goettingen, Hanover, Germany was called as assistant pastor. He was also expected to teach school at first. His salary was to be \$350 but without a free house. Pastor Lindemann arrived in Cleveland with his wife and four children in August, living during the first days in the parsonage of Zion with the Schwans but then moving over to Ohio City. Pastor Lindemann was ordained and installed in Zion August 28th by pastor Schwan. The first Communion in Ohio City, with 20 members attending, was celebrated September 25th. Lindemann opened school the next day with 20 children. It may be of some interest to know that the school tuition in Zion-Trinity was as follows, per week: One child, 8 cents; two children, 12 cents; three or more children, 15 cents. Thus Trinity was on the way of its honored history under the competent ministry of its first pastor. Our Lutheran Cyclopedia says of pastor Lindemann: "In 1864 he was elected to the presidency of the Lutheran Normal at Addison, Ill. An excellent instructor and a deeply earnest man, he left his impress on his students. He was a prolific writer, edited the 'Ev.-Luth. Schulblatt' (now 'Lutheran Education'), and the 'Lutherischer Kalender', compiled various schoolbooks, and was the author of 'Schulpraxis' (*still held in high esteem*), 'Dr. Martin Luther als Erzieher der Jugend', 'Deutsche Grammatik', and other books."

Cleveland was fortunate indeed in having such outstanding men as Schwan and Lindemann in the Zion-Trinity parish in those formative years.

While these things were transpiring in Zion-Trinity, a new congregation came into being in 1853 in East Cleveland, Euclid County (now South Euclid) incorporated under the name German Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Congregation, Euclid, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The first Lutheran settlers were the Melcher brothers. Pastor Schwan had held services in the home of Friedrich Melcher and in the Rolf homestead. Members of Zion in that area, desiring to form their own congregation, were gladly transferred and were granted a solicitation for funds in Zion for their new church in Euclid. This church was dedicated in 1855 and before long they had a church school too.

The first pastor of St. John's in Euclid was the Rev. Hermann Kuehn, born 1818 in Germany, a pupil of pastor Wilhelm Loehe of Bavaria, the guiding spirit in Germany for the Missouri Synod. Pastor Kuehn was installed by pastor Schwan

August 24, 1853. In June, 1854 the congregation was received into the Missouri Synod. The following June 10.41 acres of land were purchased at a cost of \$581.60. The money for the purchase was borrowed from various members at 10 percent.

Also this young congregation in South Euclid, profiting from the training received at Zion, exhibited a missionary spirit as is evident from the resolution adopted the very first year, namely, "that a collection be held the first Sunday of the month for the seminary in Fort Wayne or St. Louis or for missions or other purposes and needs of the congregation."

When pastor Kuehn followed a call to Zanesville, Ohio in 1860, he was succeeded by pastor John Adams Ernst, a cobbler's apprentice in Asch, Bohemia, who, when he read pastor Loehe's appeal for America, decided to study under him and in 1842 came to America, attended the Seminary of the Lutheran Ohio Synod in Columbus, Ohio, was ordained in Detroit in 1845, attended the famous meeting in the upper room of Zion in Cleveland and was there delegated, with Dr. William Sihler of Fort Wayne, to represent the Ohio men with the brethren in Missouri. He was one of the twelve voting pastors who signed the charter of Synod at Chicago in 1847. He had also, while pastor in Eden, N. Y., traveled to Canada, becoming our first missionary there for the Eastern District.

During the Civil War there was a casualty at St. John's when Color Sergeant Frank Prasse, a member of the Union Army, was killed in the battle of Chancellorsville, Va.

A new church, 26x36 with a special balcony, sacristy, lobby and tower with a bell, was dedicated October 26, 1862 by pastors Schwan, Lindemann of Trinity, Sallmann of Newburgh and Rupprecht of North Dover. The choir from Ohio City sang.

In 1863, when pastor Ernst accepted a call to Canada, his successor at St. John's in Euclid was pastor F. W. Husmann. He had been won by pastor Wyneken for America. He also attended the important meeting in the upper room of Zion in 1845 and he also had signed the charter of Synod. Thus St. John's in South Euclid has the distinction of having two pastors who were charter members of Synod. Besides this, pastor Husmann was the first secretary of Synod.

In 1875 the school had grown sufficiently so that H. A. Lossner, a son-in-law of pastor Husmann, and a former teacher at Trinity, Cleveland, was called as the first teacher. His salary was set at \$450 and tuition was to be \$5 annually for one child, \$8 for two and \$10 for three children or more.

After the death of pastor Husmann in 1881 among the candidates considered in the new calling was a pastor from "Grand Rabbits", Mich. However, the call was extended to the Rev. John Adam Ernst who had left the congregation 20 years before and was now 66 years old. He had been very successful in Canada, had organized some of the early congregations and was elected first president of the Ontario District.

Pastor Ernst accepted the call and served St. John's another twelve years and was succeeded in 1893 by pastor Schlesselmann from Friedheim, Ind.

In the school, in 1886, when teacher Lossner had decided to leave that profession, the second teacher was J. F. Hoffmeyer, born 1843 in Germany. He often taught 80 children in eight grades. He had the fine reputation of being a faithful and an able teacher.

Returning to Zion, we notice from their minutes of February 28, 1853 that

they went on record as being opposed to all secret and oath-bound societies such as Free-masons and Odd-fellows.

In the meeting of April 25, 1853 it was resolved to approve the division of Synod into four Districts — Eastern, Central, Northern and Western. This division was adopted by Synod in the very next year, 1854. Up to that time the entire church body met annually, but thereafter only triennially, the Districts meeting in the intervening two years. All the other Districts were gradually divided and subdivided. The Central District alone has practically its original boundaries, embracing Ohio, Indiana and the northern rim of Kentucky and West Virginia.

The year 1854 ushered in troublous times for Zion-Trinity. There were many and some very difficult cases of church discipline (Kirchenzucht). Among the large number of immigrants, coming from a background in the old country unacquainted with the idea of an independent congregation in free America, there were unruly elements. The task of the time was to impart knowledge and understanding of Christian truths in their practical application so that the members could be a Lutheran group ready in doctrine and practice to work together in harmony with God's holy word. This was done in all wisdom, with much patience, but at times it became necessary, as the Lord had directed in Matt. 18, 15-17, to exclude manifest and impenitent sinners.

But through all these trying times the Lord visibly blessed the ever-growing parish of Zion-Trinity in Cleveland according to His precious promise: "If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8, 31-32.

The year 1854 began with the founding of a new congregation. The minutes of January 2nd contain the resolution to grant a peaceful release to all members of Zion living six or more miles away from this church in Newburgh (*now Garfield Heights*), in order that they might organize St. John's congregation. There were 30 communicants. They did not leave empty handed. Pledges were solicited in Zion for the new church which was completed already by October 14th, at the corner of Granger and Fischer (*Turney*) Roads. The day of dedication was a day of great rejoicing and on the same day the first pastor, the Rev. John Strieter of Elyria, was installed. He preached the first sermon in the new church on October 21, 1854 and in the same week organized the school with 20 children.

Pastor Strieter was born September 9, 1829 in Wurtemberg, Germany. Coming to America with his parents, he was graduated from our Fort Wayne Seminary in 1852. He was assigned to Coshocton, Ohio where a pastor had been deposed. His trip from Fort Wayne was by canal to Toledo, by Lake Erie steamer to Cleveland, by canal to Massillon and by wagon to Coshocton. Upon arrival he found that the congregation and the deposed pastor had been reconciled. Traveling now, partly afoot, to Liverpool (*Valley City*) he followed the counsel sought from pastor Schwan in Cleveland to try to work in Elyria and serve a few families in Vermillion. He was installed there by pastor Steinbach of Liverpool. His salary was \$5.00 per month plus lodging and board with members. In the Theissen home in Elyria he taught with six children, preached on Sunday, taught Christenlehre (Sunday School for young and old) after the sermon and walked 18 miles to Vermillion. There he taught school on Monday and Tuesday and walked back to Elyria 18 miles, teaching there the remaining days of the week. Forsooth, this was pioneering labor in pristine purity.

To his lasting good fortune pastor Strieter found there his faithful helpmeet in Elizabeth, daughter of widow Ernst of Vermillion, where they lived henceforth.

In 1854 pastor Strieter accepted the call from St. John's, Newburgh. He arrived there with his wife and with widow Ernst and her five younger daughters. His salary was \$200.00. Wood for heating and gifts of food were brought too. Pastor Strieter learned to love the Newburghers, mostly Hanoverians. He said: "There I had it very good" ("*Da hatte Ich's gar schoen*"). That he was a resourceful man, thoroughly dedicated to his ministry, appears from the autobiography which he wrote after his retirement. He fain would have stayed in St. John's at Newburgh, but when an urgent call came, through the mediation of Dr. Sihler in Fort Wayne, from a large isolated Lutheran group in Wisconsin, he felt conscience-bound to ask for a peaceful release which was reluctantly granted.

The successor at St. John's was pastor Karl H. Sallmann. He was born December 25, 1817 in Grimminghausen, Germany and graduated in the seminary at Fort Wayne. Like his predecessors he was required to teach in the parish school, but after ten years of such dual responsibility he was relieved of classwork when August J. Schefft became the first called teacher of the school. He was born in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany, brought to America by his parents in 1854 and graduated in 1870 from our Teachers Seminary. He was a faithful man, teaching 41 years with much competence and dedication till his resignation.

Pastor Sallmann, after a faithful service of 17 years, was succeeded by Pastor Otto F. Kolbe, who completed his formal education at the University of Goettingen in Germany. Coming to America in 1871 he was installed at John's in 1877. It was during his pastorate that the present church and parsonage were built. He resigned in 1887 to devote himself to tutoring young men in preparation for Concordia College, Fort Wayne, specializing in Latin and Greek.

His successor was the Rev. Philip Wambsganss, born in Adams County, Indiana, February 16, 1857. He served until 1895 with his customary energy and zeal, when he accepted a call from Emanuel congregation in Fort Wayne where he later shepherded the new Emmaus congregation and became widely known for his interest in the Lutheran Hospital and in Deaconess work.

From the minutes of Zion during 1854 the following three items deserve some attention: 1) Giving, 2) Missionary outlook, and 3) Lay chairmanship.

These three things offer welcome opportunity to inquire into the spirit and mode and scope of life and work of that congregation over a hundred years ago.

First the giving for "outside" purposes. They had no mission board and no stewardship department offering inspiration and guidance and suggesting avenues for mission endeavors. They had no Synodical Budget, as we know it today. Had they been so minded, their giving might have been desultory, sparse, and self-centered. But they were not so minded. They announced in that year offerings for a church in New York, in Minnesota, in Cumberland, Md., in Sheboygan, Wis., and in Pomeroy, Ohio. And they gave annually for the Synodical treasury and for the seminaries. The members were being instructed and trained by pastors who had a fine spiritual sensitivity also in the sphere of giving for the Lord.

Secondly, the missionary outlook. At the head of some of their minutes they wrote — Cleveland and Vicinity (*Cleveland und Umgegend*). Pastors Schwan and Lindemann apparently were men of vision and men with a mission, interested not only in the local charge but in the Church at large, not afraid of losing by giving up their members to build other churches.

Thirdly, lay chairmanship in Voters' Assemblies. The first chairman so elected was John Wasserman. This is of some import. It meant that the pastors were in accord with the democratic thinking in Synod, free from the dictatorial tendencies coming to the fore in the Grabau Synod.

In the meeting of September 17, 1854 it was resolved to invite the Central District to meet in Cleveland, in Zion in the ensuing year. Since it is of historic interest, the time and place of the sessions of the Central District in Cleveland are herewith given:

In Zion 1865, 1874, 1883, 1894. In Trinity 1861, 1870, 1877, 1886.

On February 4, 1856 it is stated in the meeting of Zion-Trinity held in Ohio City: "The congregation is satisfied that pastor Lindemann preaches every third week in Parma." So early was the Gospel from the lips of one of our first pastors heard in the area which now is a large and flourishing suburb of the city of Cleveland.

The minutes of Zion from October 3, 1856 report that pastor Schwan related much that was gratifying ("viel Erfreuliches") concerning a general free Conference in Columbus, Ohio, which he attended. But in the meeting of November 16, 1857 the same general free Conference, held at Pittsburgh, Pa., was not so satisfying, pastor Schwan expressing his regret that not one of the Pennsylvania preachers took part in the Conference, at which Articles 8-11 of the Augsburg Confession was studied, all present agreeing thereto. It was decided at Pittsburgh that the next general free Conference would meet in Cleveland in the year following. That this Conference was expected by Zion appears from the minutes of July 26, 1858, but nothing is said about it thereafter in the records of Zion.

Our Lutheran Cyclopedias speaks of these conferences on page 390 in the following manner:

"Free Lutheran Conferences". "A series of conferences attended by pastors, candidates and laymen held at Columbus, Ohio (Oct. 1-7, 1856), Pittsburgh, Pa. (Oct. 29-Nov. 4, 1857), Cleveland, Ohio (Aug. 5-11, 1858), Fort Wayne, Ind. (1859). The Augsburg Confession was discussed at the meetings. Invitations to attend the conferences were extended to all who subscribed to the Augsburg Confession without reservation. The formation of the Synodical Conference may be safely listed as a fruit of the discussions. After suggestions for free Lutheran conferences had been made by various Lutheran periodicals, the College of Presidents of the Missouri Synod followed the precedent set by Walther and called for free Lutheran conferences (1949)."

From June, 1857 there were important developments for Trinity congregation. On June 8th it was resolved that the two Districts of Zion, in all external matters, should be two separate congregations and this came to a reality in May of the following year. Already on June 15, 1857 Trinity decided to build a new church, 83x36 ft., containing in the basement a large school room and a residence for the teacher. On June 29th the congregation was incorporated under the name: "The German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Congregation". On August 24th teacher J. Ch. H. Gils was installed. He was a faithful servant of the Lord. He was outstanding in the long line of dedicated teachers in Zion and Trinity and in so many other congregations yet to be. Teacher Brauer, we have noted, occupied an honored position in Zion. The people were sad when he accepted the call to Baltimore but they were glad when he went to Addison as professor.

Thus teacher Gils occupied an honored position in Trinity. The pastor and people evidently loved him. Pastor Lindemann, as the last entry in his well written chronicles, pays a fine tribute to Cantor Gils. (*So they called him. This title had also been given to Brauer.*) Lindemann says that teacher Gils, born in Meine, Hanover, May 18, 1838, a product of our Fort Wayne Seminary, served in Trinity from Aug. 24, 1857 to May 3, 1864. Pastor Lindemann says of him: "Faithfulness was the chief facet in his character. With deep sorrow the con-

gregation witnessed the increasing illness of its beloved teacher and now stands in mourning and tears at his bier. His body was committed to the earth, on Ascension Day, May 5th."

Trinity, from 1858 on a separate congregation, immediately following the pattern set by Zion, established as a daughter congregation St. Paul's congregation in North Dover (now Westlake) with 20 of its families, having 53 communicants and 93 baptized, living in that region. The official name adopted was: St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Congregation, North Dover, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

On June 13, 1858 the Rev. John J. Rupprecht, assistant pastor of St. James in Lafayette, Ind. was called. He accepted and so became the first pastor of St. Paul's, being installed on July 11th by Rev. J. C. W. Lindemann, pastor of the mother church, Trinity. Here, with pastor Rupprecht began a ministry that was to last 53 years in one and the same parish.

During the first few years divine services were conducted in a rented church belonging to the Baptist denomination. On July 18th the five weeks old congregation decided to become affiliated with the Missouri Synod.

In 1863 six acres were purchased for their property and in the next year St. Paul's new church was dedicated, which served also for school purposes.

For eleven years pastor Rupprecht taught school, but when in the fall of 1869 75 children enrolled, Mr. H. L. Brakesuehler from Rock Island, Ill., was called. He was installed as the first teacher of St. Paul's. Under his guidance the school was signally blessed. After his death, at the age of 45 years, Mr. Fred Wolf served as teacher from 1890 till 1897.

On October 14, 1877 a new church building was dedicated. Besides the German services there was also a service in the English language in the afternoon, conducted by Rev. J. H. Niemann of Trinity.

Pastor Rupprecht served St. Paul's in North Dover (now Westlake) till the time of his death in 1911, for 53 years; truly a long ministry in one place, and a very successful and blessed ministry. The following official acts were performed by Pastor Rupprecht during his ministry in St. Paul's:

Baptized	749	Confirmed	534	Communed	36,301
Married	138			Buried	250

#### 1861 — 1865

These were the years of the Civil War. That the war is not too frequently mentioned in the minutes of our churches of that day is due perhaps mainly to firm adherence to the separation of church and state.

There are, however, these references to the War. On May 6, 1861 pastor Schwan informed his congregation that the pledges which had been made for a building at Concordia College, Fort Wayne would not now be called inasmuch as the building could not be undertaken owing to the War. On October 1-7, 1862 Trinity reports the following young men as volunteers for service in the war: Henry Albers, John Hille, John Toensing, William Fatthauer and Henry Brinker.

In January, 1864 Zion decided to approve and support a petition sent by a congregation in St. Louis, addressed to the congress, "to excuse pastors from military services as long as possible."

Our Lutheran people in Cleveland, together with the rest of the population, were greatly troubled and distressed by the scourge of smallpox during 1863 and 1864. In February, 1864 the Trinity account says: "This winter the smallpox (Blattern) raged in a terrifying manner (*in einer Schrecken erregenden Weise*). The number of the stricken was very large (*sehr gross*). Schools were closed. In

Trinity over one hundred were afflicted, mostly children, but, God be praised, only a few died."

The year 1864 brought to a close the competent and faithful ministry of pastor John C. W. Lindemann when he accepted a call from Synod to become the Director or President of the Teacher Training College at Addison, Ill. Trinity congregation on June 12, 1864 gave their pastor a peaceful release, gratefully aware that he was entering into a wider service for our entire church. Their love and respect, always firm, increased with the years and the name and work of this pioneer pastor of Trinity was ever held in fond remembrance.

### WYNEKEN AT TRINITY, 1864 — 1875

In the meeting of June 19th, still under the guiding hand of pastor Lindemann, and by his suggestion, Trinity called the Rev. F. C. D. Wyneken, at that time pastor of Trinity congregation in St. Louis and also the President of the Missouri Synod.

In joyous anticipation at the prospect of having the retiring President of Synod as pastor, Trinity extended itself by setting the salary at \$800, deciding to have a new pulpit robe made and, of course, assuming the traveling expenses.

Pastor Wyneken was installed by pastor W. F. Husmann of South Euclid November 7 (25 p. Trin.), 1864. He was then 54 years old. We can appreciate how gratified the members of Trinity were to have their own pulpit occupied formally by this honored man of God.

Friedrich Conrad Dietrich Wyneken was born May 13, 1810 in a parsonage at Verden, Province of Hanover, Germany. He was a university graduate (*Goettingen and Halle*). He traveled in France and Italy. He was a linguist, speaking French and English besides his fluent, vibrant German. At the age of 28, with hopes of a bright future before him in his native land, where his relatives were prominent in Church and State, he resolved to go to America, driven by a searching sense of duty because he had heard and read of the spiritual plight of many Lutherans, scattered through the forest primeval without the Word and Worship of God.

Landing in Baltimore in 1838 he was soon commissioned by the Pennsylvania Ministerium as a missionary for Indiana. He made Fort Wayne his headquarters and base of operations, from which as St. Paul from Antioch, he made various missionary journeys. With bold determination, in fair weather and foul, on foot and on horseback, he visited large sections in northwestern Ohio, southern Michigan and northern Indiana as a messenger of the Gospel of peace. He became known in our Church as the father of Home Missions. He sent to Germany the Macedonian call "Come over and help us". He went to Germany in 1841, lecturing in many cities and organizing missionary societies for America in Bremen, Leipzig and Dresden.

Pastor Wyneken, as noted before, had attended the meeting in Cleveland in 1845 in the upper room of Zion, initiating the organization of a truly Lutheran Synod together with the Saxon fathers in Missouri. Being in Baltimore, as the pastor of St. Paul's, he did not get to Chicago for the founding of our Synod in 1847. He did join Synod the next year and already two years later he was elected president, a strong testimony indeed to his excellent endowments, his leadership qualifications and to the esteem accorded him by his brethren. He served as President of Synod from 1850-1864 in those days when it was expected of the president (*who had a congregation*) that he would visit, within three years, every church and school in Synod. He did visit as many as 60 congregations in one year.

Great was his influence through his sermons, addresses and wise counsels. It is no wonder that pastor Wyneken, Dr. Walther of St. Louis and Dr. Sihler of Fort Wayne have been called the triumvirate whose influence on the formation and development of our Church was decisive.

Pastor Wyneken was glad to be in Cleveland. Here, he said, was "peace and order". Here he experienced spirit-filled joy so peculiar to a parish ministry. Here, on the East Side, in Zion Church was his gifted nephew, his sister's son, pastor H. C. Schwan, who became the President of Synod in succession to Dr. Walther.

Pastor Wyneken, having consumed himself on his missionary labors and in office, suffered somewhat from physical infirmities, but he was nonetheless active on a high level of zest and enthusiasm. Since at that time Trinity's members lived not too far from the church and could be easily visited, the "old Pastor", as he was beginning to be thought of, could and did serve his congregation with much satisfaction and success. But when swelling immigration swiftly increased the membership, Henry Craemer, a candidate of the holy ministry, was called as assistant. The school particularly grew in importance as an instrument in the Christian Education and training of the children of the church, contributing also to the well-being of the community by building Christian character and Christian homes. In 1867 teacher Zismar was called as successor to teacher A. Ohlendorf. In 1870 the Rev. Henry Wyneken, son of the pastor, became assistant pastor and also a teacher of the upper grades and principal of the school. In the same year a new school building with four class rooms was erected. At the time that Trinity was considering the building of that school, pastor Wyneken, in a far-away vision, expressed the thought that some day perhaps they might be able to build a high school. He would have been gratified to know that in the distant future Cleveland would have a flourishing High School system.

That Trinity had a youth organization we glean only incidentally from the minutes of October 5, 1868 in which permission was granted to the Young Peoples Society to meet in the school room.

Perhaps an item affecting Pastor Wyneken personally might be recorded here. On February 1, 1866, the congregation decided to increase the pastor's salary by \$200, making his annual salary \$1000 which for that day was high indeed. He refused to accept it and tried to return it to the treasurer, but the congregation insisted by resolution that the increase should remain.

July 27, 1873 was a day of rejoicing in Trinity over the dedication of their new, large, beautiful church. Lindemann had come to preach the festival sermon in the evening. Pastor Wyneken wrote of this church in the *Lutheraner*, Vol. 29, No. 8, page 199: "The Church has a dimension of 127 by 64 by 42 feet. The steeple has a height of 175 feet. The church provides room for 1,500 persons. It was erected at a cost of \$31,000, and, let us give thanks, praise and glory unto the Lord, both the church and our school are paid to the last farthing." Trinity's own account says: "Those were the days of the first love when many of our Christian fathers would rather borrow the necessary money in order to pay their pledges in full and to furnish unto the Lord a house unencumbered by debts."

In 1874 pastor Wyneken, because of increasing infirmities, offered to resign, but this was not accepted by the congregation. In the following year, however, he submitted a formal written resignation, beseeching the congregation to grant him a peaceful termination of his pastorate at Trinity. But even then the

congregation declined to accept the resignation, suggesting instead a longer vacation with his son-in-law, pastor J. M. Buehler in San Francisco, our pioneer pastor on the west coast. During this time, in 1875, pastor Henry Wyneken, who had, before this, declined a call to Baltimore and to Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, accepted a call to our Seminary in Springfield, Ill. Under the circumstances Trinity was now compelled to look for a new, their third, pastor. They called the Rev. John H. Niemann of Little Rock, Arkansas. He was born April 11, 1848 near Melle, Province Hanover, Germany. His parents brought him to America in 1852. In 1860 he entered Concordia College, Fort Wayne, and in 1869 he was graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He accepted Trinity's call and was installed February 21, 1876, on the second Sunday after Epiphany, by the President of the Central District, Rev. H. C. Schwan. In February of this year the congregation called teacher F. Rechlin from Albany, N. Y., to take charge of the upper grades of the school. He accepted the call, served Trinity well, and in 1893 became professor at the Teachers Seminary at Addison, Ill.

Trinity was one of the largest congregations in Synod now, having 1,550 communicants and six teachers in school.

Pastor Wyneken did not find recovery of health in California. Instead, on May 4, 1876, he died in San Francisco at the home of his son-in-law. He was brought back to Cleveland. The long journey, with two stop-overs, was memorable. In St. Louis, in Trinity Church, where he had been pastor, there was a service in which Dr. Walther preached on the word: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," I Cor. 2,2. In Fort Wayne, in St. Paul's Church, where he had been pastor, there was a service in which Dr. Sihler preached on Prov. 10,7: "The memory of the just is blessed." And here in Cleveland, of course, the service was in Trinity Church, in which pastor Brohm preached on Hebr. 13,7, the word that is engraved in bronze on the Lectern-like monument over his grave in our Cleveland Lutheran cemetery: "Remember them who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

Pastor Wyneken had a worthy successor in the Rev. J. H. Niemann. He filled his place fully in the company of Schwan and Lindemann and Wyneken. He was a man of imposing personality. He was a powerful preacher and an outstanding administrator. He served Trinity with distinction for 33 years till his death in 1910. He was the President of the Central District for 29 years from 1880-1909, serving so ably because of his unusual executive abilities. In 1909 he declined re-election because of failing health. The next year he died at the age of 62 years. He was laid to rest in the Lutheran Cemetery, Cleveland.

### IN ZION AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

In 1865, on March 18, a memorial service was held over the death of President Lincoln. A few weeks later, October 3, Zion decided to build a new church, at the corner of Erie and Bolivar. Beginning with 1867 Joint Reformation services were conducted to which all our congregations in the Cleveland area were invited. Services of this type have been conducted through the years down to our day, associated now with the Lutheran Hour.

Animated always with a missionary spirit Zion on May 5, 1873 resolved to establish a mission, with a branch school at its center and erected a wooden school building at Superior and Sherbrook (*East 58th Street*). Candidate Paul Schwan, son of the pastor, was called as assistant to his father at Zion with the

understanding that he would devote himself to the Mission and be the teacher in its school. Candidate Schwan, born in Black Jack, Mo., January 1, 1851 and graduated from the St. Louis Seminary in 1873, was installed in Zion by his famous uncle, pastor Wyneken. At the new Mission the school was opened with 23 children, Christenlehre (*Sunday School*) was held on Sunday afternoon and worship in the evening. In January, 1875 teacher Ed. Lutz was called as teacher.

On May 8, 1876 an offering was asked for our congregation in Amherst, Ohio, whose church and parsonage had been destroyed by fire.

In 1876 Zion also had the privilege, the joy and the honor of celebrating the Silver Anniversary of their beloved pastor, H. C. Schwan. Professor Lindemann had come from Addison, Ill. to preach the thankful festive sermon in the morning. The speaker in the evening worship, to which all the congregations had been invited, was pastor John H. Niemann of Trinity. The presents included a gold watch and a cane with a golden head.

In July, 1877 Mr. Fred Hoerr was called as a teacher in Zion and in May, 1878 Mr. August Gockel was called as a teacher in the Mission.

The year 1878 was to be of large importance in the history of Zion, for in this year the Rev. Dr. H. C. Schwan was elected President of the Missouri Synod in succession to Dr. Walther. He continued in this high and demanding office for 21 years till 1899.

Zion congregation now released pastor Paul Schwan from all school duties at the Mission and called him as full-time assistant to his father.

Further and lasting changes developed for Zion in the next two years. In 1880 the Mission became an independent congregation, taking the name "St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, U.A.C." (*Unaltered Augsburg Confession*). Pastor Paul Schwan accepted the call to become its first pastor. This quite naturally moved Dr. H. C. Schwan to resign his pastorate at Zion because of his manifold responsibilities in his office as president and because he no longer had his son as assistant. Zion, however, granted their pastor Schwan, in genuine gratitude, the status of associate pastor to the end of his days.

On June 12, 1881 Zion called as pastor the Rev. Carl M. Zorn of Sheboygan, Wis. He was born March 18, 1846 at Sterup, Schleswig. He was graduated from the University of Leipzig in 1870. He was missionary of the Leipzig Mission Society in India 1871 to 1876 and pastor at Sheboygan 1876 to 1881 when he came to Cleveland. Like his predecessor he was also to give Zion Church 30 years of faithful and distinguished service. Pastor Zorn was an eminent man, a scholar, a forceful preacher and speaker with an impressive personality. He became favorably known in wide circles both at home and abroad for he was a voluminous writer. The Concordia Cyclopedie says: "Among his books are many popular expositions of Bible books, the most comprehensive being that on Colossians; Bekehrung und Gnadenwahl; Eunike; Crumbs; Food on the Way; Handbook for Home Study; Questions on Christian Topics . . . Dies und das aus dem Leben eines ostindischen Missionars; Dies und das aus fruehem Amtsleben; Abwaerts, Aufwaerts." Concordia Theological Seminary conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Under Dr. Zorn's guidance and competent leadership Zion's progress continued unabated. After Dr. Zorn's resignation in 1911 he devoted himself zealously to his writing. He died July 12, 1928 and was laid to rest in St. John's Cemetery at South Euclid.

Over the years the prosperous condition of Zion congregation, under God, was enhanced by the loyal service manifested in the Christian Day School by devoted teachers. Aiming at high standards and giving themselves in faith's dedication to their profession and in honor of God's holy Word, they served ably and faithfully. Such teachers at Zion in those days were:

F. Leutner from 1867-, Fred Hoerr from 1877-, and August Gockel, formerly at St. Paul's Mission, from 1878-.

### THE LUTHERAN WITNESS

Here seems to be the place to chronicle an event, of unknown significance at the particular moment, which was to play a part of tremendous importance in the long future of our Missouri Synod, namely the inception of the Lutheran Witness. It occurred in 1881 in the Northern Ohio Pastoral Conference, one of the three large official conferences of the Central District. Prophetic thinking saw the necessity of having for our Synod, besides the esteemed Lutheraner, published since 1844 in German, a church paper in the English language. A member of the Conference, the Rev. C. A. Frank of Zanesville, Ohio, was requested to be the first Editor. Thus was born the Lutheran Witness, the major official voice of our Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, now in its 79th year with a half million subscribers.

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### NEW CONGREGATIONS, CLEVELAND EAST SIDE

#### 1. ST. PAUL'S — 1880

St. Paul's may be mentioned first inasmuch as it was started already in 1873 as a school district, although the organization date of St. John's on Cable Avenue was two years earlier. St. Paul's congregation, Superior and East 58th, as we have seen, was organized in 1880 with the Rev. Paul Schwan as the first pastor and Mr. Ed. Lutz and Mr. August Gockel as the first teachers. Later teachers were: P. Ernst, 1882-1887; Miss E. Bornemann, 1883-1888 and Mr. Karl Seible 1888-1891.

In 1890, the old school building was moved to its final location. St. Paul's account says: "The rooms in these buildings were enormous compared to present-day standards, but they had to be to seat as many as one hundred pupils . . . However, it is to the great credit of the faithful teachers that, in spite of great handicaps, they achieved such outstanding success in planting the seed of the Word in our hearts as well as the three R's in our minds."

The congregation grew by leaps and bounds. In 1890 statistics read: 875 Communicants, 136 Voters and 375 children in school.

Pastor Paul Schwan, looking back on a successful ministry of 50 years, was able, in praise and thanksgiving to celebrate his golden jubilee in the midst of his flock in 1923. The Voters Assembly conferred on him the title of Pastor Emeritus and granted him a life-long pension.

#### 2. ST. JOHN'S, CABLE AVENUE — 1878

St. John's is a daughter of Zion. In 1878 some of her members, taking Kingsbury Run south of Woodland as a boundary, were granted permission to organize a new congregation which took the name: "The German Evangelical Lutheran St. John's Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio". The first place of worship was Engels Hall on Broadway and East 49th Street, for which the rent was 50 cents per month. The first pastor was Candidate August Dankworth, who was also expected to teach school. His salary was fixed at \$500. The congregation,

accepting the gift of Mr. H. Hoppensack of several lots on Bessemer Avenue near East 65th Street, erected its own building to serve as church and school. It was dedicated November 24, 1878. In the very first year St. John's also was received into membership with the Missouri Synod.

In St. John's also, as in other congregations, owing to immigration, the growth was rapid so that in 1880 the school could have as its first teacher student C. Schefft besides pastor Dankworth. Before too long, teachers John Schneider and William Lauersdorf were added to the staff, and, for one year, teacher A. Dornfeld. In 1887 Simon Gempel was installed as teacher.

Worthy of note is the fact that the young people purchased an organ which helped materially in the singing of the congregation in solemn worship.

In 1886 pastor Dankworth, having done excellent pioneering work, followed a call to Mount Hope, Ohio. Later he went to Detroit where he died of smallpox, contracted because he felt in his heart compelled to minister to a church member in the pest house dangerously ill with the same disease.

The successor at St. John's was pastor Karl Kretzmann of Farmers Retreat, Ind. On July 7, 1889 a new building on Cable Avenue near Broadway was dedicated to the Triune God, the lower floor having the necessary school rooms and the second floor an auditorium seating 600 people. After a service of eleven years pastor Kretzmann accepted a call to Vincennes, Ind.

### 3. ST. PETER'S — 1883

Once more Zion gave of its life blood to call into being a congregation which took the name of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, its territory lying between St. Paul's at East 55th Street and St. John's at Cable Avenue. The organization took place May 6, 1883. There were eighteen charter members. A lot valued at \$500 was presented to the congregation by Frederick Schoenewald, member of Zion. This lot was sold and another bought at the corner of Crown Avenue (*East 69th Street*) and Quincy Avenue. The first pastor was Candidate Max Trefft, who served four years, 1883-1887. During his ministry a two-story frame building was erected with a church-room below and a school-room above.

The second pastor was the Rev. John H. Wefel who served there from 1888 to 1893. With regard to his ministry at St. Peter's we have these words from their own account: "St. Peter's second pastor was the Reverend John H. Wefel, who came from Pomeroy, Ohio in March, 1888. Progress and harmony characterized the years of his ministry. He worked zealously for the school, himself teaching, and within a year's time the enrollment rose to nearly ninety.

He was given an assistant in the person of Miss Johanna Sallman, elder sister of Lydia who taught the little ones for one year. The following year the first male teacher, G. Reineck was called, and he taught for three years from 1890 to 1893." Thus St. Peter's could look forward to a very promising future under the blessing of the Lord. After serving in Zanesville, Ohio, Pastor Wefel returned to Cleveland in 1897 as pastor of St. John's at Cable Avenue for a very successful and very blessed ministry of 30 years. He was born September 24, 1862 in Fort Wayne, Ind. He attended St. Paul's Parochial School and Concordia College, Ft. Wayne. In 1884 he was graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis. He was president of the Central District from 1909 to 1915. Excellently endowed, he was a choice gift of the Lord for his congregations and for the Church at large.

#### 4. ZION, BEDFORD, MAPLE HEIGHTS — 1880

A second Zion congregation came into being about eleven miles from the center of Cleveland, south and east, in 1880 on Dunham Road, Bedford (now *Maple Heights*). Its location is not far from St. John's at Newburgh—(now *Garfield Heights*). In fact, the Lutheran people at Dunham Road were a part of St. John's. All their records up to 1883 are incorporated in the records of St. John's. The desire to have a school for their children nearer their own homes led to their identity by establishing a school in their District in 1880. That is the date inscribed in a "hand-hewn" style on a "home-made" cornerstone from an ordinary field boulder on their first building which was used for parochial school purposes and then also for public worship. This cornerstone was given permanent recognition by being placed in a Zion building in 1926.

The formal organization of Zion as an independent congregation took place in 1883. The meeting in which the resolution was adopted to organize as a separate congregation was held on March 28, 1883. This according to "Church records of Zion Evangelical Lutheran congregation, Bedford and Vicinity." Up to this time a parochial school had been conducted.

On May 13, 1883 the Rev. C. F. Tiemann became the first pastor of the congregation. The salary was \$100 a year plus free parsonage and the use of the acreage comprising the church property. This four-acre church property had been deeded to the congregation for \$5.00 by Mr. Carl Schreiber. Mr. C. Lutz at this time was a teacher in the parochial school.

From 1887 to 1890 the Rev. Philip Wambsganss, pastor of St. John's, also served Zion on Dunham Road. Thereafter, for about five years, the Cleveland Pastoral Conference undertook to supply Zion with preaching and pastoral care.

The growth of Zion on Dunham Road for many years was slow, but it held firmly to its separate identity and from the vantage point of our present view we are able to say that the congregation may look forward to a future of promise and blessing.

#### 5. ST. JOHN'S, COLLINWOOD — 1890

St. Paul's, East 55th, learning well its lesson from the mother church (*Zion*), established a branch of its own by organizing a new congregation in the village of Collinwood, east of Cleveland. A few facts tell the story very graphically.

1883—Pastors Paul Schwan and E. Ernst began the Mission work in Collinwood at the home of William Rolf.

1890—The congregation was formally organized, the constitution accepted and the officers elected.

1891—Four lots were purchased on East 159th Street, and the first church was built and dedicated.

1892—Candidate M. Ilse was called. He was ordained and installed August 21st.

1893—St. John's school was dedicated in January. Twenty-eight children were enrolled, pastor Ilse teaching.

Let pastor Ilse himself tell the story of those early days. He wrote in his historical account: "The year was 1890 . . . The very place where our present Parish House now stands was part of a farm. People were working for \$1.00 a day and those who received more considered themselves extremely fortunate. Collinwood was but a village with no sidewalks, no paved streets, no electric lights, no modern conveniences. No aeroplanes were flying overhead, no

the building amounted to \$7,200. The debt was divided equally between Immanuel and St. Matthew. Here we have again the same pattern — a mother congregation helping generously and lovingly to set up the daughter in the new home, a fine picture of fellowship and cooperation.

The growth of Immanuel was not materially affected by the release of so many members for soon it was found necessary to build a balcony into the church to provide room for the large number of new members attending the services. Such was the thronging about the altars of the churches in those days in Cleveland owing to continuous immigration.

St. Matthew's congregation was self-supporting from the very beginning. It joined the Missouri Synod, was a flourishing parish in Church and School and always manifested a sincere interest in the work of the Church at large.

In the spring of 1885 St. Matthew's built a nine-room parsonage for her first pastor, the Rev. J. J. Walker. He was installed on the first Sunday after Trinity in 1885. Pastor Walker served the congregation faithfully and wisely for 23 years till his retirement in 1908 because of ill health.

### 3. CHRIST CHURCH — 1890

Already on September 12, 1887 pastor Niemann stated that in Trinity's district south of Clark Avenue, commonly known as "Cuba", a school or a congregation should be started, because about 80 families living in that area found it difficult to send their children the long distance to Trinity. He also indicated that a new congregation in "Cuba" would considerably relieve the situation in Trinity, which was getting to be too large for one pastor, and mission work in the new district could be carried on more effectively. In accordance with these thoughts and after long deliberations, Trinity congregation resolved on February 24, 1889 to purchase five lots on Selden Avenue (*West 43rd Street*) at a cost of \$2,350. It further resolved that the new congregation be named Christus Gemeinde (Christ Congregation). In March of that same year it was decided to erect a frame building on those lots with an upper story for worship and with school-room space on the ground floor. The cost was \$3,813. On June 23, 1889 a call was extended to Candidate H. P. Eckhardt, a graduate of the St. Louis Seminary, as assistant to pastor Niemann at Trinity with the understanding that he would give particular attention to the new church in "Cuba". On January 1, 1890 Christ Church was formally organized as a separate congregation. A constitution was adopted and signed by eighteen voting members, and the congregation also joined the Missouri Synod. In the account of Christ Church we find these two interesting items: "The C. C. & I. railroad was fixed as the boundary line between the two parishes and the remaining debts of \$1,300 to \$1,400 on the new church property were assumed equally by both congregations." The notice anent the boundary line describes something that was common practice in our churches in Cleveland in those days. These boundaries, observed by general agreement, assured to a new congregation a definite number for Church and School from the beginning. By the increasing mobility of the people and the improved ways of communication (street car, etc.) these boundary lines disappeared by resolution or silent consent.

Christ Church provided religious instruction for its children through the medium of a Christian day school. Pastor Eckhardt taught for a while. Mr. M. Gotsch, formerly at Immanuel, was the first resident teacher, joined before long by teacher Theodor Hiltz of Tonawanda, N. Y. The school, starting with 80 pupils, grew very rapidly so that eleven years later when a fourth teacher was called the enrollment had reached 350.

radios were to be found in the homes, and the distance from Collinwood to Cleveland and return was considered a day's journey . . . and it was the pastor of St. Paul's Church, East 55th Street, the sainted pastor Paul Schwan, who became the founder and organizer of our congregation."

Pastor Ilse was born September 21, 1870 in Pittsburgh, Pa., where his father, Herman Ilse, was teacher in a Christian Day School.

Looking again a bit beyond 1893 we cannot forbear to mention that pastor Ilse, after a long, successful and blessed ministry at St. John's, became the head of our City Mission Society, establishing a number of congregations in the Cleveland area and also of our Institutional Ministry, so active and fruitful even today. Pastor Ilse is held in good remembrance, for he served the church and the Lord of the Church with diligence and zeal.

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## NEW CONGREGATIONS — CLEVELAND WEST SIDE

### 1. IMMANUEL — 1880

During the large and ever increasing membership Trinity called as assistant to Pastor Niemann, Candidate of Theology Henry Weseloh, graduate of our Seminary in St. Louis. He was born in Hanover, Germany, November 1, 1851. He was called with the understanding that, aside from being assistant pastor at Trinity, he should devote himself especially to "Brooklyn", the area about West 25th Street and Seymour Avenue with the thought of establishing a new congregation there. This matter had been considered in Trinity in 1871 and already the following year a school was built by Trinity for the children of its members living in "Brooklyn". The first teachers were pastor Weseloh, Mr. W. Bewie and Mr. W. Rudolph.

Trinity at that time had two schools and six teachers and its members, in 450 families, were spread over the West-side of Cleveland.

The new congregation in "Brooklyn" was formally organized on June 19, 1880, taking the name "Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio". To begin with it numbered 537 communicants and 58 voting members. On July 18, 1880 the new church building, erected by Trinity and its members in "Brooklyn", at the corner of Scranton Road and Seymour Avenue, was dedicated with visitors present from Akron, Massillon, North Dover, South Euclid, Newburgh and Elyria. Already in the second year the school had an enrollment of 400 pupils, the teachers being W. Bewie, M. Nessel, C. Stumme and Moritz Gotsch.

Pastor Weseloh was a prominent figure in Cleveland Lutheranism. He served Immanuel for 45 years till the end of his life in 1925. He was editor of a Kalender for German Lutherans and the author of several books. He was a man with a big heart and eminent in zeal and dedication.

### 2. ST. MATTHEW'S — 1885

In 1884 when Immanuel had 2854 baptized members and 494 children in school it was deemed proper that a new congregation be formed for her members living south of Clark Avenue, which would be the boundary line. St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church was thus organized in 1885. Prior to the formal organization, Immanuel had purchased property on Meyer Avenue, between Pearl Street (now West 25th) and Scranton, 100x200 feet and had authorized the construction of a two story frame building, 60x100<sup>1/2</sup> feet, the upper floor for worship and the lower floor for the school classes. The cost of the property and

the building amounted to \$7,200. The debt was divided equally between Immanuel and St. Matthew. Here we have again the same pattern — a mother congregation helping generously and lovingly to set up the daughter in the new home, a fine picture of fellowship and cooperation.

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In the spring of 1885 St. Matthew's built a nine-room parsonage for her first pastor, the Rev. J. J. Walker. He was installed on the first Sunday after Trinity in 1885. Pastor Walker served the congregation faithfully and wisely for 23 years till his retirement in 1908 because of ill health.

### 3. CHRIST CHURCH — 1890

Already on September 12, 1887 pastor Niemann stated that in Trinity's district south of Clark Avenue, commonly known as "Cuba", a school or a congregation should be started, because about 80 families living in that area found it difficult to send their children the long distance to Trinity. He also indicated that a new congregation in "Cuba" would considerably relieve the situation in Trinity, which was getting to be too large for one pastor, and mission work in the new district could be carried on more effectively. In accordance with these thoughts and after long deliberations, Trinity congregation resolved on February 24, 1889 to purchase five lots on Selden Avenue (*West 43rd Street*) at a cost of \$2,350. It further resolved that the new congregation be named Christus Gemeinde (Christ Congregation). In March of that same year it was decided to erect a frame building on those lots with an upper story for worship and with school-room space on the ground floor. The cost was \$3,813. On June 23, 1889 a call was extended to Candidate H. P. Eckhardt, a graduate of the St. Louis Seminary, as assistant to pastor Niemann at Trinity with the understanding that he would give particular attention to the new church in "Cuba". On January 1, 1890 Christ Church was formally organized as a separate congregation. A constitution was adopted and signed by eighteen voting members, and the congregation also joined the Missouri Synod. In the account of Christ Church we find these two interesting items: "The C. C. & I. railroad was fixed as the boundary line between the two parishes and the remaining debts of \$1,300 to \$1,400 on the new church property were assumed equally by both congregations." The notice anent the boundary line describes something that was common practice in our churches in Cleveland in those days. These boundaries, observed by general agreement, assured to a new congregation a definite number for Church and School from the beginning. By the increasing mobility of the people and the improved ways of communication (*street cars, etc.*) these boundary lines disappeared by resolution or silent consent.

Christ Church provided religious instruction for its children through the medium of a Christian day school. Pastor Eckhardt taught for a while. Mr. M. Gotsch, formerly at Immanuel, was the first resident teacher, joined before long by teacher Theodore Hinz of Tonawanda, N. Y. The school, starting with 80 pupils grew very rapidly so that eleven years later when a fourth teacher was called the enrollment had reached 325.

Christ congregation, since its organization, was a large parish in Church and School serving well the needs of our Lutheran people in "Cuba" and gathering many to the fold. When pastor Eckhardt was released in 1898 to initiate services in the English language, he was succeeded by the Rev. F. Keller who was a faithful pastor there for 46 years.

#### 4. ST. LUKE'S

Although St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Church was not formally organized till July 28, 1895, it deserves to be mentioned in this story of the first 50 years of our Church in Cleveland because it began as a branch school established by Trinity in 1881 on Lawn Ave. The first pastor was the Rev. H. C. Sauer, who served 49 years. He had the distinction of having a street, Sauer Avenue, named after him in the new location on West 85th Street. The first two teachers were Mr. S. H. W. Horst and Mr. R. H. Brakesuehler, the latter serving 48 years.

### IN THE VICINITY OF CLEVELAND

#### 1. ST. PAUL'S, LIVERPOOL, NOW VALLEY CITY — 1846

The Rev. K. A. W. Roebbelin was the first of our pastors who preached in Liverpool as early as 1846. Of him St. Paul's own record says: "With the arrival of pastor Roebbelin the history of St. Paul's congregation really begins. While St. Paul's is not mentioned till about 1851, we lay claim on this beginning and have priority to it, because Pastor Roebbelin was the first Missouri Synod pastor in the territory." But it was not until 1850 that our St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liverpool (*Valley City*) was organized, the Rev. Ferdinand Steinbach being the pastor. A wide appeal was made for financial assistance towards the building of a church. Responses and aid came from Cleveland, Elyria and Lancaster, Ohio; from Frankenmuth and Monroe, Mich.; from Fort Wayne, Ind.; Baltimore, Md. and Elkhorn, Ill. Here is an example of the help given by individuals and congregations in response to appeals one hundred years ago.

The church at Liverpool, 40x28, was dedicated October 17, 1852. For a while all had to stand during the entire service until benches were provided by placing planks on wooden blocks. The bare earth served as a floor, covered later by brick and wood. The pulpit was on top of the altar. The Klingelbeutel, a small cloth bag, attached to a long handle, received the offering. This original church building, without major remodeling, served the flock at Liverpool for over half a century. St. Paul's present account says: "Until 1924 one would occasionally hear this church referred to as the "Hahn-Kirche" ("Rooster-church") because of the weathervane which had been placed on top of its tower in 1885."

Pastor Steinbach was succeeded in 1854 by the Rev. H. Juengel, who preached also in Elyria. From this time on, for 21 years, the two congregations constituted one parish.

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#### LIVERPOOL-ELYRIA — 1854 — 1875

In St. Paul's at Liverpool pastor August Heitmuller was installed on April 14, 1861, just two days after the outbreak of the Civil War. Only one member is known to have served in the war. The pastor resided in Liverpool and taught school there, but every second Sunday he went to Elyria to conduct

worship service in the Old Court House. After a vacancy of one year and a half, in which pastor Husmann of South Euclid and pastor Rupprecht of North Dover, with difficulty, supplied the people with the Gospel as well as they could until Candidate W. H. Lothmann, graduate of the Seminary in St. Louis, accepted the call. He was ordained and installed August 19, 1866. He lived in Liverpool, teaching school there, and every second Sunday he was taken to Elyria by members, taking turns.

In 1869 when a new two-story building had been erected in Elyria with the upper floor for worship and the lower floor for the school and the parsonage, pastor Lothmann moved to Elyria. He taught school there now and every second Sunday he had divine services in Liverpool, where Mr. H. G. Grubel became the teacher of the children in school. In 1872 pastor Lothmann followed a call to Zion congregation in Akron, Ohio (*Founded in 1854*) where he served for 54 years till 1926 with visible blessings from the Lord.

The next and last pastor of the combined parish was the Rev. Carl C. Schmidt from New York City. He later accepted a call to Holy Cross in St. Louis. An honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and from 1899 to 1908 he was a Vice-president of Synod.

It was during the ministry of pastor Schmidt, in 1875, in complete harmony and to mutual advantage, that Liverpool and Elyria decided to function as separate parishes.

#### ST. PAUL'S, LIVERPOOL — 1875

St. Paul's of Liverpool now enjoyed the full ministry of the following three pastors in Church and School: Rev. Philip Schmidt (*brother of pastor Carl C. Schmidt*) 1875-1879; Rev. F. J. C. Kaiser, 1879-1893 and Rev. W. C. Steinman from 1893 on.

#### ST. JOHN'S, ELYRIA — 1875

We have read that up to 1875 St. John's of Elyria had been served by pastor John Strieter, the pioneer, and by the pastors of the combined parish, namely, Henry Juengel, 1855-1860; August Heitmuller, 1861-1865; William H. Lothmann, 1866-1872 and Carl C. Schmidt, 1872-1875. From that date on when Liverpool-Elyria became separate parishes, the Rev. Carl C. Schmidt served St. John's of Elyria till 1877. He also taught school. He was succeeded in Elyria by another brother, the Rev. J. Adam Schmidt. Born in Shelby County, Ohio, a graduate of the St. Louis Seminary, he was installed at St. John's April 5, 1877. In 1878 he married Johanna, daughter of Dr. H. C. Schwan.

In 1880 St. John's had its first regular teacher, namely, Mr. Fred Daib, followed in 1883 by Mr. J. Meyer. St. John's record says: "During these years, the congregation grew in leaps and bounds. There seemed to be no end to the stream of Mecklenburgers who left their homes in Germany and came to Elyria. During the first ten years of Rev. J. Adam Schmidt's pastorate, the congregation nearly doubled in size. In 1888 it numbered almost 500 communicant members."

A new church, urgently needed to accommodate the large increase of people, was erected at a cost of \$14,776, and dedicated May 4, 1890. Dr. Schwan of Cleveland and pastor Lothmann of Akron preached in the German services and pastor J. H. Wefel of Cleveland preached in the evening in English. Hundreds were unable to gain admittance because a whole trainload of fellow Lutherans had come from Cleveland to join in the celebration of the joyous event.

The school received a new teacher in the person of Mr. George Zehnder, a graduate of our Normal College in Addison, Ill. Mr. Zehnder, in 1896 accepted a call to St. John's Church on Cable Avenue in Cleveland where he served faithfully and ably, with much blessing, for 47 years.

Pastor J. Adam Schmidt completed his fruitful and blessed ministry of 44 years in St. John's, Elyria, assisted at last by the Rev. W. C. Birkner (*now Dr. Birkner*) Director of Missions in the Central District and Secretary of Synod. Pastor Schmidt died January, 1921 and was laid to rest in the cemetery at Elyria.

### 3. ST. PAUL'S, AMHERST — 1875

As early as 1859 Pastor Henry Juengel of Liverpool preached and administered Holy Communion in Amherst. But the actual founding of St. Paul's by a group of men, in counsel with Pastor Carl C. Schmidt of Elyria, took place February 7, 1875. The first resident pastor was the Rev. L. Dammann, 1876-1879. He also taught school. They worshipped in the old Methodist church, the first house of worship built in Amherst, acquired at a cost of \$250 and moved to a lot which cost \$400. We read in the history of St. Paul's: "In the year 1876 the congregation resolved to erect a parsonage on the open space west of the church. Then disaster struck. The house, almost ready for occupancy, the debt being paid by special effort, suddenly caught fire, burning completely down and destroying totally the church next to it. No insurance could be collected because the house had been erected too close to the church without permission from the insurance company." So the entire loss, of church and parsonage, had to be shouldered by the little group. But they rallied, inspired by their love for the Gospel of their Savior, and immediately made plans for the erection of a new house of worship.

In 1879 Pastor Dammann was succeeded by the Rev. E. Sitzman, who is said to have been a profound scholar and a powerful pulpit orator. He also taught the parochial school. During his ministry the congregation joined the Missouri Synod in 1882. After nine years of satisfying service pastor Sitzmann accepted a call in 1887 to Van Wert, Ohio. He was followed by the Rev. J. Lienhart in 1888 who also served nine years and then by the Rev. Paul Stoeppler who came in 1897 and — together with pastor J. Adam Schmidt of Elyria — began to conduct divine worship in Lorain, Ohio.

### 4. ST. JOHN'S, BEREAL — 1890

A group of Lutheran Christians, belonging to a Lutheran Church, located in Middleburg Township, decided to establish a congregation within the limits of Berea. A meeting was held July 27, 1890 in old Hulet Hall on the South side. The Rev. J. H. Niemann, pastor of Trinity Church, Cleveland, and president of the Central District of the Missouri Synod, presided at the meeting. A congregation, taking the name of St. John's Ev. Lutheran, Berea, Ohio was organized. A constitution was presented for discussion, adopted and signed by the forty-five male members present. Application was made for membership in the Missouri Synod and also a call was extended to Candidate Justus H. Rupprecht, graduate of our Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, who became the first pastor of this newly organized congregation in Berea.

Under the leadership of pastor Rupprecht plans were made for the building—not of a church, but—of a school. Services were conducted in old Temperance Hall. The school building was dedicated on December 7, 1890, pastors J. H. Niemann, J. J. Walker and H. P. Eckhardt preaching the sermons.

Pastor Rupprecht taught school until relieved by a student instructor. In 1892 a parsonage was erected between the school and "the site of the new church". We are told, "The cost of building the school and the parsonage was reduced to a minimum, much of the work being done by the members of the church."

Pastor Rupprecht served St. John's till 1896.

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### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

As we in the overview of a long backward look think upon the early history of our Church, we are particularly impressed by three things:

*First*—LOYALTY TO THE WORD OF GOD. Here was the secret of the doctrinal consciousness clearly in evidence. Here the compulsion of confessional insistence upon purity of doctrine. Here also the source of the obedience of faith and the service of love.

*Secondly*—EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. The chief agency was the Christian day school, giving the total education for life in a day when our youth seldom saw High School or College. The second agency was the "Christenlehre", a Sunday School for young and old. The children were catechised in a review of Catechism truths and their elders had a refresher course in Christian doctrine, both making for a well indoctrinated membership.

*Lastly*—MISSIONMINDEDNESS. There was a readiness to establish and aid new congregations. This pattern was general. All were animated by the same spirit. Interest in the work of the Church at large was manifested by regular contributions to the treasuries of Synod.

Mindful of God's great grace upon our Church in the far-away past, our heart-felt prayer is that our heavenly Father, through Christ our Savior, by the Holy Spirit may keep the Church of our day in his word and truth to the glory of his most holy name.

May, 1960

J. H. MEYER, D.D.

July 14, 1960

J. H. Meyer.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF BEGINNINGS  
OF MISSOURI SYNOD CHURCHES  
IN CLEVELAND AND VICINITY

1843 . . . . .	Zion, Cleveland
1846 . . . . .	St. Paul's, Valley City ( <i>formerly Liverpool</i> )
1852 . . . . .	St. John's, Elyria
1853 . . . . .	Trinity, Cleveland
1853 . . . . .	St. John's, South Euclid
1854 . . . . .	St. John's, Garfield ( <i>Newburgh</i> )
1858 . . . . .	St. Paul's, Westlake ( <i>North Dover</i> )
1875 . . . . .	St. Paul's, Amherst
1878 . . . . .	St. John's ( <i>Cable Ave.</i> ) Cleveland
1880 . . . . (School, 1872)	Immanuel, Cleveland
1880 . . . . (School, 1873)	St. Paul's (E. 55th), Cleveland
1880 . . . . .	Zion, Maple Heights
1883 . . . . .	St. Peter's, Shaker Heights ( <i>Quincy Ave.</i> )
1885 . . . . .	St. Matthew's, Cleveland
1890 . . . . .	Christ, Cleveland
1890 . . . . .	St. John's, Cleveland ( <i>Collinwood</i> )
1890 . . . . .	St. John's, Berea
1895 . . . . (School, 1881)	St. Luke's, Cleveland



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